



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

DEC 19 2016

Mr. Pedro M. Ramos, Superintendent
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks
40001 State Road 9336
Homestead, Florida 33034

**Re: National Park Service Adoption of Final Environmental Impact Statement
Central Everglades Planning Project, Miami-Dade County, Florida; CEQ
No.: 20160283**

Dear Mr. Ramos:

Pursuant to Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA) and Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 4 Office acknowledges the National Park Service's (NPS) adoption of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The CEPP EIS was published in the Federal Register on August 8, 2014, and the Record of Decision (ROD) was signed on August 31, 2015. The EPA provided comments on the CEPP Draft EIS (DEIS) and FEIS on November 1, 2013, and October 6, 2014, respectively. Please find our comment letter on the USACE FEIS attached. The EPA notes that we provided the CEPP DEIS with a rating of EC-1, or Environmental Concerns with sufficient information included in the EIS.

The EPA notes that the NPS in a letter to EPA¹ and the Notice of Availability (NOA) in the Federal Register² (FR) that the NPS is re-circulating the CEPP FEIS because the NPS was not a formal cooperating agency on the USACE CEPP FEIS and the NPS now wishes to adopt this FEIS by reference. The NPS plans to implement one of the project components covered in the CEPP FEIS, which is the removal of 5.7 miles of the Old Tamiami Trail within the Everglades National Park (ENP) to improve hydrologic sheetflow in ENP. The EPA also notes that the NPS does not plan to solicit public comment during the 30-day wait period and will release a ROD at the end of this wait period. However, as stated in the FR NOA, the NPS intends to conduct a more refined, site-specific analysis on the Old Tamiami Trail removal project.

The EPA acknowledges the NPS FR NOA and looks forward to working with the NPS and other stakeholders on any subsequent NEPA actions related to this action. We also request a copy of the ROD

¹ Pedro Ramos (NPS), letter to Dawn Roberts (EPA), no date.

² Recirculation and Adoption of the Central Everglades Planning Project Final Environmental Impact Statement. Federal Register: Daily Journal of the United States. Web.: Dec 2, 2016.

when it becomes available. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Jamie Higgins, of my staff, at 404-562-9681 or by e-mail at Higgins.jamie@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Alan Farmer", written over the printed name.

G. Alan Farmer

Director

Resource Conservation and Restoration Division

Attachment: EPA Comment Letter on the USACE CEPP FEIS